

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program configured to perform~~for performing~~ processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image-forming apparatus comprising:

a format information acquisition part configured to acquire~~that acquires~~ format information from an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part, the format information including information on whether a format of image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus and information on a compression rate of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the connected apparatus;

a format determination part configured to determine~~that determines~~ a transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus based on the acquired format information; and

an image data conversion part configured to perform~~that performs~~ format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus in accordance with the determined transfer-time format of the image data.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an apparatus selection part configured to select~~that selects~~ one or more

apparatuses from a plurality of apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said apparatus selection part is configured to select~~selects~~ the one or more connected apparatuses based on an input by an operator.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said apparatus selection part is configured to select~~selects~~ the one or more connected apparatuses based on information input to the image-forming apparatus.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire~~acquires~~ the format information by making a request to the connected apparatus for the format information.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information includes at least one of: information indicating, format by format, whether a format~~formats~~ of image data is~~are~~ supportable as input and is supportable as output by the connected apparatus; information on a format of image data convertible in the connected apparatus; information on compression of the convertible format of image data; and information as to whether the format~~formats~~ of image data is~~are~~ convertible by hardware in the connected apparatus.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to store~~stores~~ the acquired format information based on a unit of the connected apparatus.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format determination part is configured to determine~~determines~~ a format of image data with at the highest compression rate from the acquired format information as the transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire~~acquires~~ the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of activation of the image-forming apparatus.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising an evaluation part configured to evaluate~~that evaluates~~ the connected apparatus independently based on the format information acquired therefrom.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein a result of an~~the~~ evaluation by said evaluation part is displayable~~displayed~~ to an operator.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the image-forming apparatus is configured to display a result of the evaluation by said evaluation part ~~is displayed on the image-forming apparatus~~.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising an evaluation part configured to evaluate~~that evaluates~~ each apparatus~~of apparatuses~~ connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part independently based on the format information acquired therefrom.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format determination part is configured to determine~~determines~~ a reversible compression format from the acquired format information as the transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire~~acquires~~ the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of transferring the image data thereto.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said format information acquisition part is configured to acquire~~acquires~~ the format information from the connected apparatus when an operator determines ~~that~~ the image data is to be transferred.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising an image quality selection part configured to determine~~that determines~~ whether to transfer the image data with high image quality to the connected apparatus.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said format determination part is configured to determine~~determines~~ a reversible compression format from the acquired format information as the transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus when said image quality selection part determines ~~that~~ the image data is to be transferred with high image quality to the connected apparatus.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising an image quality selection part configured to select~~that selects~~ a level of image quality at which the image data is transferred to the connected apparatus.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein said format determination part is configured to determine~~determines~~ whether to transfer the image data with a single format when the image data is to be transferred to a plurality of apparatuses connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein said format determination part is configured to transfer~~transfers~~ the image data to

the connected apparatuses with the image data remaining unconverted when the image data is prevented from being transferred to the connected apparatuses with the single format.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the apparatus is configured to connect~~connected~~ to the image-forming apparatus through a network.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): An image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program configured to perform~~for performing~~ processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image-forming apparatus comprising:

a format information generation part configured to generate~~that generates~~ format information including a format of image data supportable as input by the image-forming apparatus and information on a compression rate of the format of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the image-forming apparatus;

a format information supply part configured to supply~~that supplies~~ the generated format information to an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part; and

an image data conversion part configured to convert the~~that converts~~ image data received from the connected apparatus in accordance with a format of the received image data, wherein

the connected apparatus is configured to determine the format of the received image data based on the generated format information.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein said format information includes at least one of: information indicating, format by format, whether a format~~formats~~ of image data ~~is~~are supportable as input and is supportable as output by the image-forming apparatus; information on a format of image data convertible in the image-forming apparatus; information on compression of the convertible format of image data; and information as to whether the format~~formats~~ of image data ~~is~~are convertible by hardware in the image-forming apparatus.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein the apparatus is configured to connect~~connected~~ to the image-forming apparatus through a network.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): An image data transfer method of an image-forming apparatus with a hardware resource used for image formation, a program configured to perform~~for performing~~ processing related to the image formation, and a communication part, the image data transfer method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(a) acquiring format information from an apparatus connected to the image-forming apparatus via the communication part, the format information including information on whether a format of image data is supportable as input by the connected apparatus and information on a compression rate of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the connected apparatus;

(b)-determining a transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus based on the acquired format information; and

(e)-performing format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the connected apparatus in accordance with the determined transfer-time format of the image data.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein said acquiring~~step (a)~~ acquires the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of activation of the image-forming apparatus.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein said acquiring~~step (a)~~ acquires the format information from the connected apparatus at a time of transferring the image data thereto.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): The image data transfer method as claimed in claim 26, wherein the apparatus is configured to connect~~connected~~ to the image-forming apparatus through a network.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): A method of transferring image data between first and second image-forming apparatuses connected via a network, the method comprising ~~the~~ steps of:

(a)-generating format information, by the first image-forming apparatus, ~~generating~~ ~~format information~~-including a format of the image data supportable as input by the first



image-forming apparatus and information on a compression rate of the format of the image data for a format conversion to be performed by the first image-forming apparatus;

~~(b) acquiring format information, by~~ the second image-forming apparatus, ~~acquiring the format information from the first image-forming apparatus via the network;~~

~~(c) determining, by~~ the second image-forming apparatus, ~~determining~~ a transfer-time format of the image data to be transferred to the first image-forming apparatus via the network based on the acquired format information; and

~~(d) performing format conversion, by~~ the second image-forming apparatus, ~~performing format conversion of the image data to be transferred to the first image-forming apparatus via the network in accordance with the determined transfer-time format of the image data.~~

Claim 31 (New): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the transfer-time format is the image format with a highest compression rate that is either output by the apparatus or is convertible by the apparatus.

Claim 32 (New): The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the transfer-time format is the image format with a highest compression rate that is either output by the apparatus or is both convertible and printable by the apparatus.